

Anno XII/2015

# VOCI

*Annuale di Scienze Umane*  
*diretto da Luigi M. Lombardi Satriani*



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GRUPPO PERIODICI PELLEGRINI

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Annuale di Scienze Umane

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*ETNOGRAFIE VISIVE NELLA RICERCA  
ANTROPOLOGICA CONTEMPORANEA:  
CINEMA, VIDEO, FOTOGRAFIA,  
REALTÀ VIRTUALE*

A CURA DI ANTONELLO RICCI



# Collaboration in/through Ethnographic Film: A Conversation

STEVEN FELD, ANTONELLO RICCI

In this conversation Steven Feld (University of New Mexico, USA) and Antonello Ricci ("Sapienza" Università di Roma) discuss the four hour-long films that comprise the Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra series. Feld presents his ideas of "dialogic editing" and "dialogic auditing" as refinements of the playback and feedback methods he learned in the 1970s as a student of Jean Rouch. Feld and Ricci discuss and analyze the audio-visual methods and theory informing the Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra series. Their conversation reveals how a practice of collaborative ciné-ethnography was developed over ten years in these four stylistically diverse films about contemporary musical life in Accra, Ghana.

**ANTONELLO RICCI:** After reading your book *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra*, watching and listening to your movies and to the records you've made, I would like to propose a few keywords for our conversation. I have focused on them also based on our previous talks; in fact I think that there are some very close points of contact with what I myself am developing in the course of my filmic ethnography work (Ricci 2013, 2014, 2015). The first keywords that I want to discuss are the two themes of collaboration and ethnography. They have as direct references Marcel Mauss and the gift dialectic, and Jean Rouch and the ethno-dialogue dialectic (the filmmaker ethno-watches, ethno-observes and ethno-thinks, the subjects ethno-show, ethno-speak, ethno-think). So, collaboration and ethnography: the research (gift, *don*); the shots (gift, *don*); the editing (feedback and dialogue); the restitution (*contredon*); the circulation (*contredon*).

STEVEN FELD: Thank you Antonello. I am grateful for the chance to talk about our shared interest in entanglements of collaboration and ethnography. These themes are central to my work of the last ten years in Ghana, which equally concentrates on representations in film, sound, and text. I am indeed always mindful of Mauss's theorization of how the gift expresses multiple needs, necessities, and sentiments of both the giver and taker, and of Rouch's notion of

ethno-dialogue as the foundation of a ciné-ethnography. Theoretical and practical engagement with these are critical, I believe, to a contemporary and post-colonial media anthropology that is both *partagé* and *engagé*, to use the familiar French terms.

As an undergraduate student (1969-71) I studied with Colin Turnbull, author of the famous *The Forest People* (1961) and other studies of the Mbuti “pygmies,” as well as *The Lonely African*, (1963) and other books that engaged questions of ethics and morality in Africa’s inter- and trans-cultural world encounters. Colin quite notably started each of his classes with a reading from Mauss’s *The Gift* (1954). He encouraged us to think carefully about reciprocity and obligation, and how they were activated in both symmetric and asymmetric relations of power. He insisted that the meditation on giving and taking was fundamental to anthropological reflexivity. He insisted that the vexed nature of “exchange” was critical to an understanding of all research encounters and all acts of representation. These discussions made a huge impact on me at such a young age. They shaped my earliest sense of the epistemology of research, the politics of field methodology, and the ethics of representation. Concerning that early influence, I returned to the problem of the gift in the essay on “pygmy POP” (1996) that I wrote in memory of Colin, a piece that considered the politics of gift exchange in and through “world music.”

Then in 1974, during my graduate student years at Indiana, I spent a semester with Jean Rouch at the Comité du Film Ethnographique, located at the old Musée de l’Homme in Paris. Rouch’s way of watching films and discussing films during the weekly seminars always raised the questions of what is given and what is not in the taking of images. They also raised the questions of what is returned, and what is not, in their projection or playback. Rouch was a kind of pre- or proto-postmodern anthropologist in this way of posing questions without answers. His emphasis on storytelling, on improvisation, on feedback, and on shared dreams really disrupted the standard kind of political or symbolic anthropology perspectives of the time. I saw clearly that the issues of gifts and exchanges informed all of his writings and his interviews, and I made collaboration and storytelling central issues in *Ciné-Ethnography*, the English language collection of his work (2003). So, yes, the gift dialectic and the ethno-dialogue dialectic have been with me a long time now.

**AR:** In the four feature length films you made in Ghana, *Hallelujah!* (2009), *A Por Por Funeral for Ashirifie* (2009), *Accra Trane Station: The Music and Art of Nii Noi Nortey* (2009), *The Story of Por Por* (2013), the collaborative approach we are talking about is very clear. Rouch’s lesson is very present. The protagonists in the films are not passive informants, but they are active elements of your anthropological work and are also subjects offering their own ideas of the world. They propose choices, suggest research paths, and contribute to the project, which represents them and their cultural knowledges and experiences.

SF: The making of these four films really is a story of evolving collaborative relationships, of synergies and complicities of Ghanaba, Nii Yemo Nunu, Nii Noi Nortey, and myself. All four of the Ghana feature films came from requests or suggestions from my interlocutors, and all of them developed in stages, back and forth between the US, Europe and Ghana two or three times for feedback before we settled on final versions.

When I went to Ghana for the first time in 2004, it was only for two weeks, and I had no idea that I would do research there at all. Meeting the charismatic instrumentalist and sculptor Nii Noi Nortey and his brilliant percussionist Nii Otoo Annan compelled me to return the next year, but strictly as a recordist, to produce their tribute CD for the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of John Coltrane's *A Love Supreme*. During that month-long visit, in 2005, they introduced me to Ghanaba, Ghana's most iconic jazz figure, and to their close friend, the photographer Nii Yemo Nunu. That's when the film projects were set into motion.

Within ten minutes of meeting Ghanaba – that's all – he asked me to film his version of Handel's *Hallelujah* Chorus. A few weeks later I shot the performance, a thirty-five minute one-shot *plan séquence à la Rouch*, plus some other ancillary details. But I did not yet really know the man. I was simply plunged into the ritual theatre of that performance, and responded through a "participating" camera technique, walking with a wide angle lens, and recording sound both at the camera and from a separate recorder and microphones on the drums and the chorus. I did a simple edit of the material and brought it back to show him in 2006, when I returned to live in Ghana for six months. During that time I met with Ghanaba and we watched the footage several times, and he made some suggestions about the material. I did another round of edits and brought those back to him in 2007, when I returned for another six month residency. At that point I suggested that we film a conversation to unpack the complexities of the performance. After almost two years I felt that I knew him well enough to do this. At the same time he opened his archive to me and we were able to weave more than one hundred personal photographs into the conversation section. All of this work was done with the close consultation of his personal photographer and close friend, Nii Yemo Nunu. I edited the two sections together, the performance and conversation plus photos, and brought the film back to Ghanaba in 2008 for some final feedback. We launched it later that year, on his 85<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The story with Nii Yemo Nunu developed along the same timeline. When we met in 2005 Nii Yemo told me that his father had been a famous lorry driver, and that he would introduce me to the drivers union and their honk horn band, the "por por." I was instantly captivated by this story and the following year, 2006, Nii Yemo and I produced a documentary CD for Smithsonian Folkways about the Por Por music. When it was released in 2007 I felt that I knew the musicians and elder drivers well and that we had gained their trust. So Nii Yemo and I began working on a historical documentary about lorry driving and the origins of the por por music. That work developed over the next five years, lengthy con-

versations with twenty-five drivers, many of them over the age of eighty, and filming all the activities related to driving and por por music, always together with Nii Yemo. *The Story of Por Por*, a completely co-produced and co-directed film, bearing his name first, is really a tribute to his father's generation and the story of their work that he grew up with. And it took a long time to make. But it also yielded a huge archive of thousands of images and seven hundred pages of transcribed interviews, from which we will also make a substantial book.

In 2008, as we were working on this historical project, one of the most-loved members of the band died unexpectedly. The band and drivers union asked us to stop everything and to devote ourselves to filming the funeral of this driver. So, in a very intense week of activities, we filmed *A Por Por Funeral for Ashirifie* in which Nii Yemo also plays a key role.

During the time in 2005 that we recording the *Love Supreme* tribute CD, Nii Noi Nortey and I began a series of video dialogues we called The Coltrane Conversations. It was a way to get to know each other, to listen to music together and to look at performance videos and speak about the different ways John Coltrane was a central and critical inspiration in our lives as musicians. We continued these video conversations for three years, through my long visits in 2006, 2007, 2008, and also during our times together performing in Ghana, the USA and Europe, and recording *Meditations* (2006) and *Another Blue Train* (2007). This material became the film *Accra Trane Station: The Music and Art of Nii Noi Nortey*.

When I wrote the book *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra* (2012) it was a companion to what was by then already published, three of the four feature films and eight CDs. So the book also chronicles these friendships and the blurred lines of biography, history, ethnography and memoir that are the foundation to the production of our collaborative anthropology. Playback and feedback, as well as dialogic editing and dialogic auditing, define the spirit, the method, the ethics, the aesthetics, and the politics of the whole project. I began the book with these words, from the linguistic philosopher Michail Bakhtin: "The artistic will to polyphony is the will to the event." And I really believe that this is what the whole project is about: ethnography as multi-vocal collaboration, realized in a polyphony of text, sound, and image representations. Many readers of the book tell me that the films and CDs perform the gift of making audible and visible something that might otherwise be very abstract. My African collaborators phrase it the other way around, saying that the book is the gift of annotating for academic and general readers what is so alive in their immediate world of image and sound.

**AR: The forms of ethno-dialogue and collaboration you mention here are even more evident in your related but shorter Accra movies, *Pyraonix: The Sounding Sculptures of Nii Noi Nortey* (2014) and *M.V. Labadi: The Story of Ataa Anangbi Anangfio As Told by Nii Yemo Nunu* (2013). In the first it takes the form of personal performance, in the second it takes the form of an emic ethnography.**

SF: Yes. From 2004-2014 I made still photographs yearly to document Nii Noi's sculptures. *Pyrasonix* is a chronicle of these developments, and includes a conversation and performance piece that also stands alone as a shorter film within the film. This project came from a desire to feature Nii Noi as a visual artist, to have him expound more on that aspect of his work. Likewise, while working on the por por history film with Nii Yemo, I became aware of his large personal collection of family photographs related to his father's driving history. So we improvised a short film, with him simply showing me the photographs and narrating his related memories in the moment. Both of these projects are meant to show what happens when African artists collaborate through photography and film to tell a part of their creative and personal stories.

In the preamble to his ten minute one shot film of *plan séquence, Les Tambours d'Avant* (1971), Rouch called the work an "ethnographic film in the first person". When he used this phrase in the film, and a related article (Rouch 1978) the "first person" was always the filmmaker, exposing his or her intersubjective voice as the author. I wanted, in these films with modern Africans, to explore ways the concept of "first person" presents new possibilities for local protagonists to represent their subjective positions. So through collaboration and sound and film media I am trying to theorize the very nature of what we more abstractly call subjectivity and intersubjectivity in one-to-one ethno-collaborations.

**AR: Looking more closely at these topics, some additional keywords emerge from the type of ethnography that is perceived while watching the movies. The two films on Por Por Music are more classic, dialogic and collaborative ethnography. *Hallelujah!* is more ethnography of only one person, strongly dialogical and collaborative. And *Accra Trane Station* is more a circular ethnography (a circle that includes all the involved parts on the same level and from the same observation points), strongly dialogical and collaborative.**

SF: I think your terms and typology are very accurate. Let me add that collaboration as method or praxis was not new to me in Ghana. I worked 1975-2000 in Papua New Guinea together with another ethnographer, Edward Schieffelin, and a linguist, Bambi Schieffelin. We collaborated at many levels and Bambi and I produced a tri-lingual dictionary of the Bosavi language (1998) in explicit collaboration with five local co-authors. The most radical work I did there was with audio, because the CD recordings *Voices of the Rainforest* (2011/1991) and *Rainforest Soundwalks* (2011/2001) greatly extended the kind of anthropology of sound research reported in *Sound and Sentiment* (2012/1982) and made it available to many new audiences as an anthropology in sound, through radio, the "world music" market, and especially environmental sound art exhibits and presentations. I also did a dialogic and collaborative book project, *Music Grooves*, with Charlie Keil (1994). And in Europe I have been able to collaborate not as the ethnographer or researcher but as a companion listener-recorder, in dialogue

with local experts. This is the case, for example, in the Basilicata CDs I have done with Nicola Scaldaferrì here in Italy (2006, 2012), and in other ways in Greece (Blau-Keil-Keil-Feld 2002; Blau-Amanatidis-Panopoulos-Feld, 2011). Also in Europe I made radio collaborations with Helmi Järviuoma for Radio Atelje on YLE in Finland (2008, 2013). So the collaborative path that I have followed in Ghana develops from previous and concurrent media experiences and experiments.

But in Ghana what was special was that I met exceptional people with whom I shared a language, and artistic and political interests, and the desire to work together was immediate, which I also take as a sign of their cosmopolitan openness. Nii Yemo Nunu was working as a photographer for Ghanaba and also for the Por Por group; that opened special visual conversations about collecting, displaying, and conversing through the visual. Nii Noi Nortey and Nii Otoo Annan asked me to play music with them and this meant a special musical conversation, one that would make me appreciate not just their musical skills, but their conditions of labor. Ghanaba asked me to make a film that he badly wanted as a document at the end of his life; this shaped an opportunity to get into close conversation with a very complex person who had a reputation for being very difficult. In addition to all of this I was also collaborating on film, sound, and photographic projects in the same years with the Australian/Italian visual artist Virginia Ryan (*The Castaways Project*, 2007; *Exposures*, 2007; *Topographies of the Dark*, 2008). And I was collaborating on very dialogic music composition and performance projects with the multi-instrumentalist Nii Otoo Annan (*Bufo Variations*, 2008; *Ghana Sea Blues*, 2012).

**AR:** For all of these projects you used the camcorder, sometimes with external audio for a better sound recording. But in your writings you refer to these with the terms “film” and “cinema” more than “video.” I would like to ask how you define your work with the camcorder, which language you employ to achieve your products. Do you consider yourself a filmmaker or a videomaker? From an artistic point of view the difference exists. Do you think there are differences between film and video in anthropology? If you think there are differences, in your opinion, do you consider more suitable a cinematographic or videographic approach in anthropology? The problem did not appear to Rouch because he was born and died with the film camera. The problem concerns, for example, David McDougall: though his latest works are in electronic technology, he always talks about cinema and not video (1998). These topics interest me a lot: I’m reflecting about them also in the paper that I’m writing for Voci.

**SF:** If I consider myself a filmmaker or favor the term “film” in my writing it is because I was educated in the medium of 16mm film and, earlier, in the medium of ¼” sound recording for music, radio, and film. And I was educated in an era dominated by watching images made in 16mm and 35mm and sound made

with ¼" audio recording – an era where the independence and interdependence of sound (voice, music, ambience) and image had a distinct quality related to analogue media. I think it is important that I first worked with sound and image both separately and synchronously, first with the Eclair NPR camera and the stereo Nagra recorder. In other words, because I was not trained in video, the synchronization of sound is never an immediate, obvious, or ubiquitous approach or solution for me. Also, I did not grow up artistically or ethnographically in an era dominated by digital editing, computer sound-image integration, nor an era dominated by internet distribution and viewings typically on the computer or TV screen with lo-resolution audio.

The Accra films were made with a video camcorder but often with external two and four channel sound equipment in addition to a modified on-camera sync microphone. These films have certain qualities which we associate with Rouch's approach, namely the use of the wide angle lens coupled with the walking camera and the reflexive gesture of using many filmic means to assert the presence and authorship of the individual behind the camera. These blend with qualities which we associate with video, the most important being immediacy and intimacy. Video is a natural medium for medium close-up and close-up images that favor the feel for presence and interaction. It really is a medium that seems natural to record conversations at the breakfast table. It is a very informal medium, both because of portability and light weight, and it projects the ambient and ephemeral quality of interaction quite well. This is why I brought a video camcorder (a Canon GL2) with me to Accra in 2004: simply with the idea that I might record some conversations or immediate impressions. But it turned out to take me in many other direction. I had no serious budget for filmmaking, so the projects are not in high resolution and have a "rough-and-ready" look and feel. I did the best I could with the limited technical means of the GL2 plus considerably more professional microphones and sound recording gear, which I was principally using for the CD projects. But basically the rough and in-the-moment video aesthetic is dominant. The presence of a film aesthetic is more a matter of the ways the sound and image interact multiply, and comes from the many visual and sonic economies employed to tell different kinds of ethno-dialogic stories. In the current work I use DSLR (Canon D70) and independent sound recording equipment. I like this technology because of the ways it encourages exploration of the independent and interdependent relations of image and sound, both through the use of different lenses, and various kinds of microphones and sound recording interfaces. The image resolution is improving. So perhaps in this sense my experience is more akin to what you note about David MacDougall's current practice, of being a filmmaker working in the medium of video. But really, my own case is a bit more odd: I am originally a soundmaker whose subjects compelled me to move into the image-sound totality of filmmaking.

**AR: Another deepening here is that I find in all your projects that photo-**

graphs and photography are both objects and research tools, and, at the same time, they are also subjects and actors in the filmic research. I am very interested in your own reflections about this because in my work I have also often used photography in this complex way: in other words, I photographed a lot, I collected photographs, I used them to build a good relationship with people, and I used them as an ethnographic tool of elicitation (Ricci-Tucci 2004, Ricci 2012).

SF: Thank you for this observation; it is a very important point. I never want sound or image to simply be the medium of presentation nor merely the method of collection. I want the image-sound to be a total universe of exploration. This means doing anthropology of sound in sound together with doing anthropology of the image in images. Sound and image are primary material, the media and method of discovery of course. But sound and image productions are also media about media, media that comment on mediation by the way they shape their discourses. Like you I am concerned here not to divide subject and object, or method and theory, but to explore how collaborative thinking with and through images and sounds makes possible an anthropology that reveals the total materiality of sound and image, from media to mediation to mediatization.

**AR: Another deepening: in your films you make use of the interview, but I would call it a dialogue. Sometimes, the questions and discussion topics are formulated by you; other times they are issued by other protagonists of the films, for example Nii Yemo Nunu. In all cases, I think that it is possible to identify two different cinematographic perspectives depending on the point of view in front or beyond the camera. In one the interview is a tool of ethnographic representation by the researcher. In the other, the tale, the narration, is a tool of ethnographic representation for the subject of research.**

SF: I agree. Voice is an ethnographic material, as is persona, and in cinema and sound these materials can be rendered with particular subtlety, revealing dimensions of subjectivity that reach deeply into the potentials for unique forms of dialogic practice. In *Hallelujah!* Ghanaba's voice starts the film off camera: "This is Ghanaba..." and he speaks his introduction through the entire preamble of the film before you finally see his image. This is a way of bringing voice into heightened presence for the viewer, connecting the point of view and perspective to a distinctive person, and also making clear first through sound the dialogic "I" behind the entire conception that one is *seeing*. Nii Noi's voice, saying "We could hear our struggles when Coltrane screamed" starts the *Accra Trane Station* film, but here I do a more conventional thing of just having the voice for a second before bringing the image and my overlapping voice to set the film up as a dialogue. But I filmed that face to face, closely, and while Nii Noi is talking to me in that moment, the image and public intimacy of the sound, with the ambient

birds and noises of the neighborhood in the background, also instantly set him up as speaking to the viewer. *The Story of Por Por* opens with “Hello, everyone, my name is Nii Yemo Nunu...” on the soundtrack over a montage of images of Nunu walking through La town while setting up the tale with a short story. This establishes the film as his chronicle, keying him as narrator of an adventure, the one inviting you to watch and listen. Then his voice and image come back into the picture and soundtrack many times and in different ways, together or separately, as interviewer, as photographer, as witness, as participant. His role as animator is played out differently in *A Por Por Funeral for Ashirifie*, kept in the background until the final sequence of the film where he sits at the union office with the band leader, and discusses with him the book of images of the New Orleans jazz funeral. So attention to how voice is established either at the start, end, or at other junctures in the films, is very important to me. In each case I am shaping the dialogic space that indexes the ethics and politics of work collaborations.

**AR: A final deepening concerns the cinematographic language of your movies and also the work of your colleagues (your editor Jeremiah Ra Richards, and others). I would propose some keywords to take up: First, the sequence shot and/or “in-camera editing,” which is Rouch’s dialogic lesson. In this regard I remember Filippo Bonini Baraldi’s film (2013) *Plan-séquence d’une mort criée* which consists in a one hour sequence shot of a played, sung and shouted funeral. It seems to me that it has some points in common with your perspective which begins from *gisalo* and gets to por por funeral for Ashirifie. Next, framing: the author’s choice or imposition vs. the subject’s choice or imposition; finally, editing, and post production.**

SF: It is important to me that each film experiments with different sound-image economies. *Hallelujah!* combines an extreme example of shot sequence and in-camera editing: the entire first half, the performance, is a single shot of almost thirty minutes. But this is juxtaposed with material shot in a more conventional conversation style, with my voice raising the questions off camera, and Ghana-ba’s responses on camera, layered with historical still photographs as he speaks. And of course the camera is stable at this time. This juxtaposition strikes me as doubly dialogic: in the first half I use the camera to dance with his performance; in the second I speak with him and allow him, through photographs and words, to slowly take us into his story and the story of the performance we’ve just seen. *Plan-séquence* shooting also was critical to how I shot all the material for *A Por Por Funeral for Ashirifie*. In fact everything was ten to thirty minute long sequence shots and it could have been possible to do something closer to what Filippo did in his very powerful and moving use of the technique. But we wanted to tell a larger story about the time-space of the funeral and the ways the por por horns celebrated while mourning. So we ended up constructing the film from two and

three minute edits from the shot sequences, with the exception of one ten-minute long shot at the climax of the funeral with the band performing around the body.

Sequence shots with the walking camera are also important in *Accra Trane Station*, like the shot where Nii Noi walks me through an exhibit of his Coltrane sculptures and we end up singing "Giant Steps" together. But again we constructed the film more with one to three minute shots than through long ones. *The Story of Por Por* was the only film where I was not so frequently hand-holding the camera, but in addition to all of the conversations there are clips in there from many long sequence shots, of performances and events. And there are several handheld walking shots in the streets, in the bus with the band, and at musical events.

With regard to framing, I almost always use the wide angle lens because it allows me to be close and at the same time have a contextual view that can move fluidly through scenes. This is something that Rouch taught us extensively in his film classes, to walk with the camera using the wide-angle lens to make space and interpersonal interactions sharply defined. I wear DSM stereo surround sound microphones on my head to sonically match the perspective of the wide-angle lens. There are scenes when my interlocutors invite or suggest a frame, but largely I do the framing work to index my bodily presence in the scene and to help map the physical space for the viewer, like in *Por Por Funeral* when I walk around the hearse outdoors, or join the lines of mourners dancing around the body, or in *Hallelujah!* when I follow Ghanaba to his drums, or in scenes where I try to indicate the relations of musicians and dancers.

Rouch always insisted that the camera operator was the first spectator through the viewfinder, but that the objectivity of a second spectator, someone who was neither there at the scene, nor involved as a researcher, was absolutely necessary for the editing. I have always followed this rule in practice. I edit the films in the viewfinder and am always thinking about narrative continuity and thematic juxtapositions as I shoot. But the construction of the film, and the selection from the shot sequences, absolutely requires an objective person who can look at the material with a cold and technical eye. Jeremiah Ra Richards has been that person for me and has been the editor on all of the Accra films. I rely on his ability to see what I don't see and to also be my first critic, putting aside anything that is sentimental or technically unsatisfactory. We work together on the plan and the details of each film, and at every stage. But I trust him to make the post-production into a new kind of dialogue, which is about how to best realize the materials, whatever their strengths or limitations. Jeremiah also introduced me to his friend, the sound engineer Peter Fineberg, and we have worked together at Peter's studio for all the post-production sound mixes. Peter too brings terrific technical skill into the post-production. Collaborating with people who are much younger is very satisfying, because they have a deeper knowledge of the new digital domain technologies for post-production. It has been a pleasure to learn so much from Jeremiah and Peter while making these films.

Also part of post-production is the issue of language. Nii Yemo Nunu in Ghana and Kwame Assenyoh in the US have worked with me on the Ga to English translations that are so critical. Obsessing over translation details is very time-consuming but I am hugely committed to collaboration at this level too. And because I have benefited from stimulating conversations and friendships in France and Italy for many years now, I also have made subtitled versions of the films in French and Italian, with the help of my partner Jocelyne Guilbault and my colleague Lorenzo Ferrarini. I very much want to honor the encouragement and reception my film work has received from French and Italian speaking viewers, and also want to reach audiences beyond the English-speaking world. So that is another dialogic zone of collaboration and feedback.

Finally, with post-post-production, we come to the issue of circulation and compensation. The films were all funded in advance, so there were no costs to repay from sales or rentals. But it was agreed by all participants that money from these projects should be returned regularly to Ghana. So VoxLox, my production company, sells physical copies of the DVDs to university libraries, and one hundred percent of that money creates a royalty flow to the sources of the work in Accra. Everyone in Accra also received all of the prize money when *A Por Por Funeral for Ashirifie* received the Prix Bartok in 2010. However in order to increase opportunities for the films to be seen, in Ghana and elsewhere, I have posted all of them online for free viewing, through [www.stevenfeld.net](http://www.stevenfeld.net) or [www.vimeo.com/voxlox](http://www.vimeo.com/voxlox). So the gift meets the counter-gift to become another gift. Or, to extend Rouch, himself extending a quote from Dziga Vertov: by giving birth to new viewers and viewings, the hope is always that films will give birth to films.

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*In copertina:*

Uganda del nord, 1933-1934. *Gemelli*, la madre dei gemelli pone i figli in grembo a Renato Boccassino, (foto padre Giuseppe Pasquale Crazzolara), gelatina ai sali d'argento, cm. 9x12, ICCD GFN Archivio fotografico, fondo Boccassino (RBN000002).